Mr. Chairman,

The discussion on crime prevention and criminal justice is rightfully attributed to this Committee. There is an evident value-added in examining how sound legislative and judicial systems can contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights, the rule of law and good governance. At the same time, we also need to shed light on how such systems can lead to violations of fundamental rights and freedoms if deficient or abused. This Committee should contribute to supporting and strengthening the mandate and services of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime through its work and deliberations. The launch of the discussions on the post-2015 development agenda provides a particularly valuable perspective on matters of crime prevention, criminal justice, corruption and counter-terrorism as their cross-cutting nature becomes evident. The rule of law, good governance and full respect for human rights are crucial prevention and stability factors and should be an integral part of the foundation of the new post-2015 sustainable development agenda. With its broad mandate and expertise in assessing national laws and standards, the Office has an important role to play in making societies more inclusive and sustainable in their development.
The inclusiveness of societies can be seriously undermined by barriers and obstacles in the access to judicial and political institutions and processes that prevent individuals from claiming their fundamental rights and freedoms. In this context Liechtenstein considers the following two areas of particular importance: first, the prevalence of corrupt practices in all regions and societies, in particular in the form of routine everyday abuses of authority, be it in the law and order, the health or the political context to name but a few; second, legislation that bars parts of society from their effective participation in decision-making processes, often under the guise of security policy.

Mr. Chairman,

Combatting corruption is a key responsibility of the international community. After having developed internationally recognized legal standards, in particular the United Nations Convention against Corruption, we have to work towards more effective global implementation and monitoring of these standards. Liechtenstein considers this a priority at the domestic level and within the framework of the Convention. Liechtenstein is fully committed to the standards set out in the Convention with regard to the recovery, return and disposal of assets and continuously works to further improve relevant national procedures while ensuring rule of law principles, in particular appeal rights, and the respect of its international obligations. Liechtenstein continues to assign a substantive part of its international cooperation and development assistance efforts on capacity building to fight corruption. In this context, we have longstanding and successful partnerships with United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, UNDP, the Worldbank and the International Center for Asset Recovery of the Basel Institute on Governance. At the same time, we need to have a more systematic look at corrupt practices as an obstacle to the full enjoyment of human rights. Liechtenstein considers the resolution on corruption newly introduced to this Committee last year as a welcome, but so far missed opportunity for such an approach. The resolution still has to prove its value added to this Committee by focusing on combatting corruption where it affects people most directly. It will have to address instances of everyday corruption by which millions of people are affected in their everyday lives and in the enjoyment of their fundamental rights and freedoms. It will have
to look at them as leading to everyday discrimination, barriers to health services, to political participation and violence.

Mr. Chairman,

Liechtenstein understands the legitimate concerns of States to ensure security for their people, in particular in relation to multifaceted terrorist threats, and is committed to full and effective international cooperation in this area. The corpus of the United Nations anti-terrorism conventions, all ratified and implemented by Liechtenstein, provides a solid framework for such cooperation. However, Liechtenstein finds continued reason for concern at the extent some laws and practices at the national level interfere with well-established and recognized international human rights law standards. International human rights law and rule of law principles must be the basis for the implementation of standards in the fight against terrorism. Recent revelations, however, point to the need for stronger scrutiny at the international level of the compatibility of current surveillance practices with existing human rights law, in particular the right to privacy. Liechtenstein will engage constructively to foster an international dialogue on this topic. In addition, Liechtenstein is concerned at ongoing tendencies to unduly restrict fundamental rights and freedoms under the guise of “anti-terrorism” or “security” laws and the penalties thereunder. Internationally recognized human rights law does not allow for the toughening of anti-terrorism legislation in response to legitimate expressions of political dissent. Liechtenstein is particularly concerned at excessive sanctions under such laws, for example the revoking of citizenship, and urges for an immediate reconsideration of such measures. Liechtenstein will continue to highlight such issues of concern, including in the upcoming discussions of this Committee. It also recognizes that the mandate of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, alongside other United Nations entities and procedures, allows it to strengthen its activities to assist states in bringing their anti-terrorism legislation in compliance with human rights law and we encourage the Office to do so.